



DHEC's Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling

For Your Information...

Paper Recycling

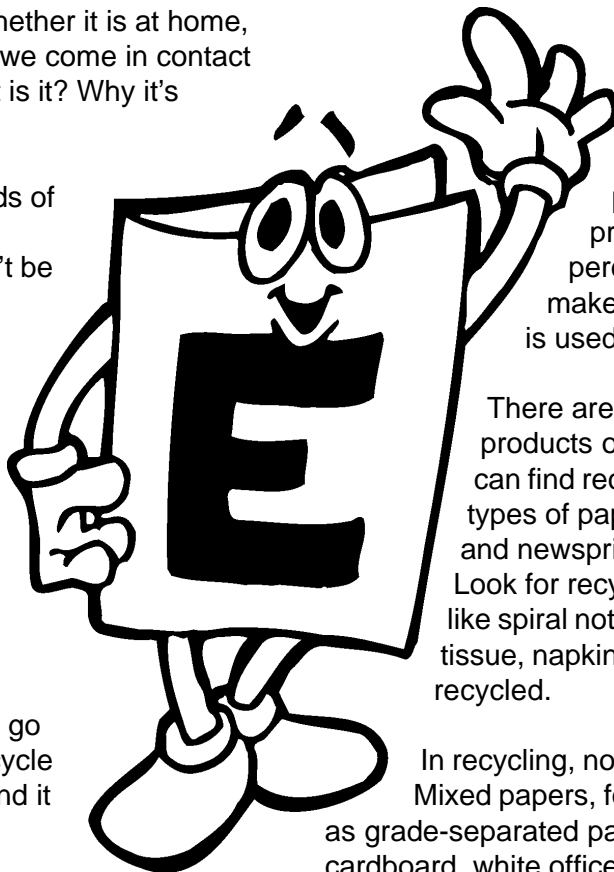
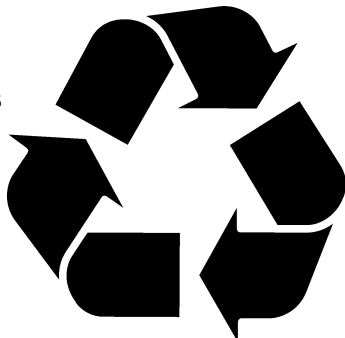
All of us use it...and lots of it. Whether it is at home, work, school or when we travel, we come in contact with it each and every day. What is it? Why it's paper, of course.

Americans use nearly 700 pounds of paper a year and the amount continues to increase. It shouldn't be a surprise that paper and paperboard products make up the largest part of the nation's solid waste stream – almost 40 percent. But the real success is in the fact that more than 45 percent of the paper we now use is collected and either recycled, exported or put to other uses.

Recycling paper makes sense because it makes our resources go farther. Paper is also easy to recycle because it is made from wood and it separates back into fibers when soaked in water.

Can you guess which of the following can be made from recycled paper?

- Writing paper
- Pencils
- Tissues
- Greeting cards
- Books and book covers
- Jigsaw puzzles
- Cereal boxes
- Shoe soles
- Newspapers
- Egg cartons
- Game boards
- Paper towels
- Loose-leaf binders



The answer may surprise you: all of them. In fact, about 75 percent of all the paper recovered in the United States is recycled into new paper and paperboard products. The remaining 25 percent is exported or reused to make products like compost which is used to improve soil conditions.

There are many recycled content paper products on the market. Consumers now can find recovered fiber in virtually all types of paper products – from packaging and newsprint to tissues and stationary. Look for recycled content paper in products like spiral notebooks and loose-leaf paper, tissue, napkins and even toilet paper. Buy recycled.

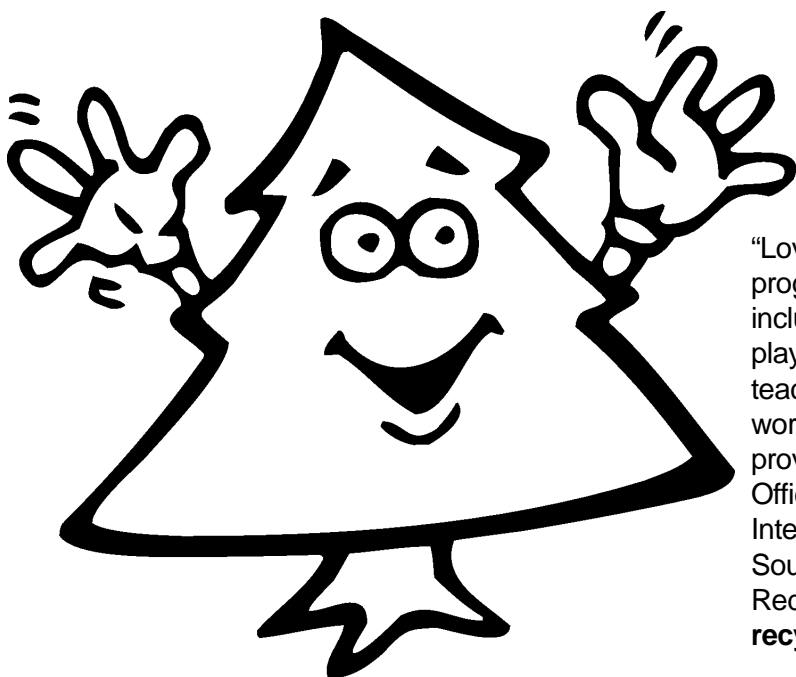
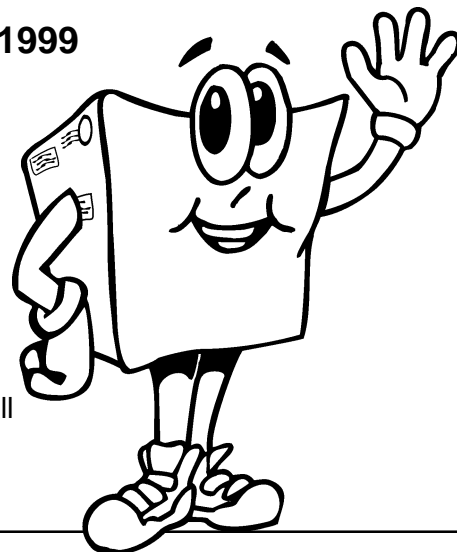
In recycling, not all paper is created equal. Mixed papers, for example, are not as versatile as grade-separated paper such as clean corrugated cardboard, white office paper or newspapers. Inks, glues, plastic windows and adhesives make some used paper less practical and more costly to recycle into new paper products. These contaminants must be removed before the recovered fiber can be used again. That's why it is important to know what is collected in your local recycling program. For a list of materials collected in your area, contact your local solid waste department or visit www.scdhec.net/recycle.

As we begin a new century, the challenge for paper recycling will be to find better ways of collecting high-quality papers from offices and more efficient ways of collecting old corrugated boxes from small businesses and residences. Practical ways of collecting computer, facsimile papers and other sorted office paper from the fast-growing home office market also will be explored.

Paper Recycling in South Carolina for Fiscal Year 1999 (July 1 - June 30)

- Paper represented about 40 percent of South Carolina's total waste stream.
- More than 1.7 million tons of paper was collected for recycling.
- More than 289,000 tons was cardboard.

RECYCLING FACT: Where do all the boxes go? Almost 80 percent of all old corrugated boxes are recycled back into new containerboard and paperboard products.



'Love A Tree South Carolina'

"Love A Tree South Carolina" is a hands-on educational program to teach students about forest stewardship, including paper recycling and the important role trees play in our everyday lives. The program is designed for teachers to use with their classes or for students working independently. "Love A Tree South Carolina" is provided by an education partnership between DHEC's Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling and International Paper. To learn more about "Love A Tree South Carolina," visit DHEC's Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling Web site at www.scdhec.net/recycle or call 1-800-768-7348.



DHEC's Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling FYIs provide general information on environmental topics. Readers are encouraged to reproduce this material. For more information about solid waste issues, please call 1-800-768-7348 or visit our Web site at www.scdhec.net/recycle. Please send written correspondence to: DHEC's Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling, 2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201.